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THE
DIARY OF JOHN PEMBERTON,
FOR THE YEARS 1777 AND 1778.

EDITED FROM THE MSS. IN THE POSSESSION OF THE SOCIETY,

BY

ELI K. PRICE.

A Paper read before "The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of
Philadelphia," Thursday Evening, July 5, 1866.

PHILADELPHIA:
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THE DIARY OF JOHN PEMBERTON.

The Society has referred to me two "Diaries of John Pemberton, for 1777 and 1778," asking me to edit them for publication. These are chiefly interesting as being in the veritable handwriting of one of the most worthy men of his time, at a most interesting period of our history. They are notes made in "Poor Will's Pocket Almanack," printed by Joseph Cruikshank. The first begins thus: "John Pemberton's. My dear mother died 24th of 2d mo., 1765, in her 74th year." 1777, January, 1st mo., "15th, cousin M. Pleasants, d. d. of a daughter." "16th, 17th, 18th, very cold. 19th Oronoake's wife d. d. of a son." "21st, Mark Miller and Thos. Redman, committed to Gloucester Goal, for reading an Epistle in the Meetings." "30th, Hannah Logan, widow of William, died about 6 this morning." Feby. 2d mo., "23d. Saml. Class buried; 24th, snowed all day and is very deep." March, 3d mo., "10th. Jos. White died; 12th, Jos. White buried at the Falls." June "25th, Dr. Young buried." August, 8 mo., "4, 5, 6, 7, 9th, exceeding hot;" 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15th, continued very hot." "14th, several persons died suddenly with the heat and drinking cold water. The widdow Morrisson buried, aged about 84; sister to John Bringham dec'd; lived about 40 years in the house she died in. 15th, Thos. Tilbury buried. He died last night about 11 o'clock, the effect of drinking water when hot; was down stairs about 6 o'clock in the evening." September, 9 mo., "2d. I was deprived of my liberty, and taken into confinement by order of Congress, and the President and Council of Penna. without any just cause, as were divers other *Friends*. 11th, a bloody battle between the American and English near Birmingham Meeting House.

About same time myself and 19 others banished from Philadelphia as the above was fought, viz., about 5 o'clock, P. M. 20th, English entered and took possession of Philadelphia without opposition. 29th, arrived at Winchester. Our Yearly Meeting held very peaceably at Philadelphia." October, 10th mo., "16th. Elizth. Shipley died, aged about 87 years. 23d, Augusta ship of war blown up. The report reached to Nottingham and shook the windows as Friends sat in Meeting. 10th mo. 24th. Houses at Winchester illuminated on account of the defeat and capture of Genl. Burgoyne and his army." November, 11th mo., "21st. The Americans set fire to their armed vessels in the Delaware. 22d. An earthquake at Philada. between 7 and 8 o'clock, A. M., felt at West river in MI'd. 28, 29, 30th. Snowed at Winchester, from 9 to 16 inches deep." December, 12th mo., "5th. Esther White died, aged about 77 years. 12th. Snowed in the morning. 25th. Snowed in the morning. 28. Snow about 4 inches deep. 29th. Very cold. 30, 31st. Very cold."

1778. Several money transactions with his brother-in-law, Isaac Zane, Jur., erased as settled. Jany., 1st mo., "4, 5, 6th. Exceeding moderate fine weather, and all the remainder of the week mild, like spring. The 7th, it rained; 11th, much snow; 12th, a fine day, mild; 13th, clear and cold; 14, 15, and 16th, cold; 17th, rainy, snow last night; 23d, very stormy and cold, and snowed; 24th, mild and fine day." February, 2d mo., "8th, deep snow; 9th, fair and very cold; 24, 25th, very mild weather; 27th, snowed much the fore part of the day, mild the latter part; 28th, snowed this morning." March, 3rd mo., "2d. A deep snow. Thos. Gilpin died about 1 o'clock in the morning. 3d. More snow and very cold, T. Gilpin buried." (He was one of the exiles.) "4th, very cold. 8th, a fine day; 9 and 10th, rainy weather. 16th, removed from Winchester to David Brown's. 22d. John Hunt's leg amputated." (He was one of the exiles.) "25th. J. Hunt's leg opened and dressed. 27th, cold and raw day; 28th, fair and pleasant; 29th, very snowy and stormy." April, 4th mo., "21st. Myself and H. D. (Henry Drinker,) left Winchester; 25th, arrived at

Lancaster; 27th, discharged by council; 30th, returned from banishment to Philadelphia." May, 5th mo., "20th. My riding mare brought 2 foals, both mares; one died immediately, and the other in 2 days after. 20th. Phineas Pemberton, brother James's son, died about 7 o'clock, A. M. 21st. Do., buried in the evening." June, 6th mo., "6th. The King's Commissioners, to treat of an accommodation with America arrived. Ship from London also, with provisions for poor Friends, &c. 17th and 18th, the English evacuated Philada., and the Americans entered on the 18th. In the morning, and following days the weather extremely hot, from about the 15th to the beginning of the 7th month, and for some weeks in that, at times very hot, more so than for many years." September, 9th mo., "26th. Yearly Meeting very large; and all the following week very fine weather." October, 10th mo., "5th. Yearly Meeting ended about 7 o'clock, P. M. 9th. Jona. Zane died about 1 o'clock, A. M. 25th. Sister M. Pemberton died, aged about 75. 27th. M. P. buried." November, 11th mo., "4th. John Roberts and Abraham Carlile put to death in this city. 18th. Reese Meredith buried." December, 12th mo., "5th. Rainy. A. Wright put to death. 8, 9th. Clear mild weather. Very cold the latter part of the month; and raw weather most of the other part of the month."

EXPLANATIONS.

1777, 1 mo., 21st. Miller and Redman, committed for reading Epistles from the Friends' Meeting for sufferings held at Philada., dated 21 of 12th mo., 1776. See, 3 Frd's Miscel'y, 104; and Gilpin's "Exiles in Virginia," p. 282 and 291. This Epistle recalled Friends to their peaceful profession, and discouraged the severance of the connection with Great Britain.

1st mo., 30th. Wm. Logan was son of James, Secretary of Wm. Penn, and Chief Justice and Governor of Pennsylvania.

3d mo., 10. Joseph White was a minister at Falls, Bucks County, (Memorials, 359.)

6th mo., 6. Arrival of Comrs. See, 2 Diary of Revolution, 62. Evacuation Ib., 65.

9th mo., 11. This was the battle of Brandywine, fought at Birmingham Meeting House, which was made a hospital by the British. In view of this I was born, and there first worshipped, and there are our dead of the past generations.

10th mo., 16. Elizth. Shipley, a minister, long resident at Wilmington, widow of Wm. Shipley, [Memls. 371; Smith's His. Del. Co. 501.] She made a religious visit to England with Esther White, in 1743. The New Jersey Gazette of March 11, 1778, for the encouragement of the American cause, published her alleged prophecy, *That this country* should not be conquered by Great Britain. (Moore's Diary of the Revln. 2 vol. 31.)

10th mo., 23. Augusta, ship of war blown up. See an account of the battle at Fort Mifflin; Penn. Arch., v. 708, &c. The Augusta frigate was aground in the Delaware under the fire of Fort Mifflin. From that point Nottingham Meeting was distant over forty miles by an air line, being near the Maryland line, and in the South West corner of Chester County.

12th mo., 5th. Esther White was wife of John White, of Wilmington, an earnest, cheerful minister among Friends, (Meml. 374.)

1778, 10th mo., 25th. Mary Pemberton was wife of John's brother, Israel. Her health was seriously affected by the exile of her husband, as was his by that event and her death; and his followed on 22d of 4th mo., 1779. (Ib. 386, and Frd's Miscly. 48.)

11th mo., 4. Brief reports of the trials of Roberts and Carlile are in 1 Dallas, 35 and 39. The charges were aiding and assisting the enemy. The alleged offence of the latter was that he had accepted a power to let people out of the city while in possession of the British, and had taken some salt from persons he termed rebels. The overt acts charged against the former were that he persuaded others to enlist with the enemy, and that he was going to the Head of Elk to communicate with the enemy. Nov. 3d. The Supreme Executive Council refused to reprieve, 11 Col. Recd. 614, and on the next day they were hung. These persons were Friends, but acting entirely on

their individual responsibility; and were tried under great prejudice and bias of witnesses and public feeling. 11th mo., 18th. Reese Meredith was a merchant and owner of real estate, including a tract in now 20th Ward, of Philadelphia. When Colonel Washington was here about 1755, R. Meredith saw him as a stranger at the Coffee House, and without introduction invited him to share his hospitality; and thence ensued a lasting friendship. 2 Watson, 165.

12th mo., 5th. A. Wright, was a laborer, convicted of burglary. The occasion of J. Pemberton's note was, no doubt, his aversion to capital punishments.

The brief diary of John Pemberton affords me an occasion to speak of a family, which was ancient in England before the settlement of Pennsylvania, and which has been well known and been most highly esteemed in all of our Colonial and State history. The descendants are very numerous, but much more in the female branches under other names than that of Pemberton.

A great grandson of James Pemberton, hereafter mentioned, Phineas Pemberton Morris, Esquire, furnishes me with the following extracts made by him in England from Baine's History of Lancashire, vol. iii. p. 561 and 2. "Pemberton is a populous and extensive township, containing the manufacturing village of Lamberhead Green. Adam de Pemberton was living in the reign of Richard 1st., and in 3rd John, his son Alan paid ten marks to have seizin of his lands in Pemberton." "An ancient half-timbered habitation called Pemberton Hall, the abode of the De Pemberton's in the reign of Henry VIII., and subsequently of the Marklands, is now scarcely remembered." "A little west from Ince," says Holland Watson, "this place gave name and seat to an ancient family of which Sir Goddard Pemberton settled at St. Albans, 1615; whose son, Ralph Pemberton, Esquire, was twice Mayor of that place, father of Sir Francis Pemberton, Knight, Lord Chief Justice of both Benches and Privy Counsellor, who died 1697, aged 72. Lewis Pemberton, Esquire, succeeded Sir Goddard in the

Shrievalty of Hertford Shire, for the latter part of 1615 and 1617. Was knighted by James 1st at Burry Hall."

The above named Ralph Pemberton, though probably connected by blood, could not have been the same who came to Pennsylvania in 1683, with his son, Phineas, according to the account of the Pemberton family," which I ascribe to the late James Pemberton Parke, son of Doctor Thomas Parke. He was son of William Pemberton, who May 30th; 1625, took a lease of a cottage at Aspull, in Lancashire, of Roger Hindley, of Hindley Hall, its "crofts or clausures of land, gardens, pastures, feedings," &c., for the three lives of his children, Alice, Margay, and Ralph, and the survivor of them. This Ralph's issue were Phineas and Joseph, the former born 11th mo., 31, 1649-50. *Phineas Pemberton* and his wife, Phœbe, came with his aged father, Ralph, who died in 1687, and her father, James Harrison, to Pennsylvania in 1683, and settled at the Falls, in Bucks County. He was a member of Council in 1685, and Speaker of the Assembly in 1698. (1 Col. Records, 125, 548). In him was concentrated several of the most important offices of Bucks County; and the records yet there, which I have seen, abundantly attest his care, neatness, and skill. In 1683, he was appointed deputy Register; in 1686, was appointed deputy Master of the Rolls; in 1689, was appointed Receiver of Proprietary Quit Rents; in 1691, Register General of that County; and in 1696, was made Master of the Rolls in place of Thomas Lloyd. He was also a Surveyor. (Ib. 514.) He died 1st mo., 1st, 1702. He left few his equal "for wisdom and integrity, and a general service." (7 Friends' Miscellany, 36.) *Israel Pemberton*, his son, was born 12 mo., 20th, 1684-5. He was an apprentice with Samuel Carpenter in this City, and become an eminent and successful merchant, and in many ways publicly useful, as well as in his own religious Society. The Philadelphia Monthly Meeting say in their memorial of him, "Having chosen the fear of the Lord in his youth, and being preserved therein, he established and supported an unblemished character by his justice, integrity, and uprightness in his dealing amongst men, and his mild, steady, and prudent

conduct through life. He was a member of this meeting near fifty years, and being well grounded in the principles of truth, of sound judgment and understanding, he approved himself a faithful Elder; adorning our holy profession by a life of meekness, humility, circumspection, and a disinterested regard to the honor of truth; of great use in the exercise of our discipline, being a lover of peace and unity in the church, careful to promote and maintain it; constant in the attendance of meetings, and his deportment therein grave, solid, and reverent, and a true sympathizer with those who were honestly concerned in the ministry; a conspicuous example of moderation and plainness; extensive in his charity and of great benevolence."

The deceased Israel Pemberton left three sons who followed his example, and became eminently useful in their generation; *Israel*, the eldest; *James*, born 6th mo., 26th, 1723, and *John*, born 11th mo., 27th, 1727. *James*, as his father, was a successful merchant; a person of great public usefulness, and an elder in the religious Society of Friend; a manager of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. He died 2d mo., 9th, 1809. *John* Pemberton was also bred a merchant; entered into business for a time; but in 1751, began to speak in the ministry; and the greater part of the residue of his life was devoted in the ministry at home and abroad, many years having been spent in foreign lands; and in Pyrmont, Germany, he closed his valuable life and services on the 31st of the 1st month, 1795. His hand traced the notes before us.

All the Pemberton's above named rendered much valuable service to humanity, in maintaining a peaceful and friendly intercourse with the native Indians; in alleviating the sufferings of the African race; and in maintaining all the humane testimonies of the Society of Friends. They were eminent among men at a period of our American history, when we turn to the Quakers of Pennsylvania, and the contiguous colonies and State for the most pleasing examples of human life.

More certainly than other men did the Friends find within themselves the evidence of our immortal being, and in the vivid

realization of the future, were enabled to sink the objects and pursuits of this life into comparative unimportance; except as they were made available for their immortal happiness. Brissot de Warville, when in this country in 1788, studied them with the head and heart of a philosopher and philanthropist, and in writing of an interview he had had with James Pemberton after the loss of a beloved daughter, said, "The Quakers carry to the borders of the tomb this same tranquility of mind; and it even forsakes not the women at this distressing moment. This is the fruit of their religious principles, and of a regular, virtuous life. They consider heaven as their country; and they cannot conceive why death, which conducts them to it, should be a misfortune. This habitual serenity does not diminish their sensibility. The respectable Pemberton recounted to me the death of a beloved daughter which happened the day before. I could see the tear steal down his cheek, which a moment's reflection caused to disappear. He loved to speak to me of her virtues and her resignation during her long agony. 'She was an angel,' said he, 'and she is now in her place.' This good father did not exaggerate. You will find in this Society many of these celestial images clothed in serenity; the symbol of eternal peace and conscious virtue." (7 *Frd's Miscellany*, 81.)

The note of the banishment to Virginia requires a separate consideration. The Friends sent into exile were among the most eminent for influence and usefulness. There were twenty exiles, and besides the three brothers, Pemberton, first named in the order of Council, there were named therein, Thomas Wharton, Senr., Miers Fisher, Phineas Bond, William Drewet Smith, Owen Jones, Jur., Thos. Gilpin, Elijah Brown, Revd. Thos. Coombe, Thos. Fisher, Saml. Fisher, Henry Drinker, Saml. Pleasants, John Hunt, Charles Jervis, Thos. Pike, William Smith, Charles Eddy, Edward Pennington, and Thos. Affleck. In their protest the signatures of two are thus: William Drewet Smith and Samuel R. Fisher. Those who well understand Friends' views and principles can recur to the events without any disposition to reproach their motives or

character. They were non-combatants in principles; and consequently bound to abide quietly under the government existing over them. They can take no part in war, can contribute nothing specifically for its support, consequently can never be rebels against the powers that be. Generally they did not desire change; and felt a strong attachment to their relatives and brethren in religious fellowship in England, and their feelings of humanity shrank from the horrors of war. Both John and James Pemberton kept journals during the Revolution much more ample in expression than the brief facts now serving us as texts. See 7 Frd's Miscellany, 62, and 8th do. 58. John, feelingly notices the number of soldiers killed and wounded, and that fresh men came, many of whom, he says, appear like reputable farmers. "But the sorrowful reflections occur in thinking, how many wives were likely to become widows and children fatherless; and that the spectacles of misery and mortality which abound, had not a more humbling effect upon the minds of the people." And under date of 3d mo., 22d, 1777; he speaks of proclamations for fasts both in England and America, and prayers for success in the struggle of arms; and admitting the necessity to fast from all wrong things, and to humble ourselves because of the great impiety and wickedness that abound, and of entreaty that the Lord might have mercy and pity the people, he proceeds to ask, "How could it be supposed that we, as a Religious Society, could comply with such voluntary injunctions, when thereby Friends in England and Friends here might implore the same Divine Being for contrary and contradictory things!" (Ib. 63.)

After the passage of acts for test oaths the Friends in their Yearly Meeting of 1778, adopted the following expression of their views. "On consideration of what is necessary to be proposed to Friends on the subject of declaration of allegiance and abjuration, required by some late laws by the Legislatures who now preside in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, we are united in judgment, that, consistent with our religious principles, we cannot comply with the requisitions of those laws, as we cannot be instrumental in setting up or pulling down any

government; but it becomes us to show forth a peaceable and meek behaviour to all men seeking their good, and to live a sober, useful, and religious life, without joining ourselves with any party in war, or with the spirit of strife and contention now prevailing. And we believe that if our conduct is thus uniform and steady, and our hope fixed on the Omnipotent Arm for relief, He will, in time, amply reward us with lasting peace, which hath been the experience of our Friends in time past, and we hope, of some now under suffering."

In the disposition to oppress Friends Washington never participated, and the Pemberton journals, as well as others, afford ample proof of that fact as well as oral traditions.

But the zeal and earnestness of the patriots of the revolution could neither tolerate opposition nor neutrality; and the spirit of the times demanded victims; and hence Friends were banished to Virginia, and some at home were hung. We can see now, at this distance of time, with more perfect information and free from excitement how needlessly they suffered. True Friends, as certainly they were who were sent into exile, could no more give aid and comfort to the enemy than to the American cause; and if wisely left to their own convictions, they would have been found ministering unto human suffering wheresoever found, and proceeding from whatsoever cause, as has been proved during the late war of the rebellion.

A full narrative with the attesting documents relating to the banishment of Friends, and a few of the Episcopal Church was printed by Thomas Gilpin for the subscribers in 1848, and is in the Philadelphia Library. He was son of Thomas Gilpin who died in exile; and his mother, Lydia, was sister of Samuel R. and Miers Fisher.

The John Hunt who died in exile in Virginia, whose eminent services are often mentioned by others in journals and letters, was an eminent minister among Friends. He sustained the principle and courage of his companions, though himself to fall the second victim, and to die after suffering amputation under the discomforts of banishment from home and family.

The John Hunt who died in Virginia was not the same as

the John Hunt whose notes in the Revolution the Society sent to me. The latter was also a minister in the Society of Friends, who resided at Moorestown, N. J., and lived until 1824, and died, aged 84 years. He began a diary in 1770, which he continued unto the year of his death; to be found in 10th volume of Comly's Friends' Miscellany. The notes sent me belong to the 1st volume of that collection. These supposed prognostics were gloomy in prophecy, and for the period of trial and purgation sad in their realization. With Friends, foreboding visions and anticipated troubles, nature herself seemed to sympathize, or the Almighty to show his displeasure with man by marring his works. These were looked upon as stripped and blighted, that rebellious man should not enjoy her bright verdure and her accustomed fruits. These were destroyed by the caterpillar, the frosts, and locusts. Diseases and violence prevailed among men, and madness among animals, and fear fell upon the minds of the people. Measles, small-pox, camp-fever, and the Hessian fly; drafting, imprisonments, billeting of soldiers, and occupation of Meeting Houses for hospitals, came with the war. But the war ended after seven years; the Friends acquiesced in the change; made their friendly address to General Washington, as President of the United States, and received a kind response from him who always respected their conscientious convictions. Nature and Friends again assumed a happy aspect; but to the minds of Friends a dark cloud yet rested upon the nation, still threatening a Divine retribution, so long as the sons of Africa were kept in bondage, and the Indians suffered wrong by the encroachments of white men. The day of deliverance came at last for the slaves, not as Friends would have wished by peaceful means, yet by means permitted by Him to whom vengeance belongeth; and the liberated slaves, and yet extant Indians claim their aid in common with our paternal government.

In conclusion I would say that the efforts of our Society have not begun to soon. Many materials exist that are daily passing away among the descendants of old families that would illustrate history, and interest deeply our descendants in our

most worthy ancestors. More of these exist in the custody of the Meetings of Friends and among their descendants than in any equal number of our citizens. Those belonging to the Meetings are not easily accessible to those not in membership; yet it is evident that Dr. Smith's History of Delaware county has been much enriched from that source; Dr. Michener's Early Retrospect of Quakerism is made up from that source; and Comly's Friends' Miscellany in twelve volumes, contains only matters that relate to that Religious Society.



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